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Summary

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30 DAYS TO GO - LAST CHANCE!

There is only 1 month left to go until the 2008 questionnaire closes, not to re-open until 2011. Over 91,000 Random Samples have been generated from the 2006 database, highlighting the demand for the data by users. Please remember that the 2008 database cannot exist without your students submitting a questionnaire, so don't let this chance go by! **Now is the time** to submit a questionnaire. Participation ensures that there is a rich data source from your area for your students to use. To ensure your students can get the most out of CensusAtSchool:

- 1. Have all the classes in your school complete a survey not just your class!** The more data the better for your students.
- 2. Encourage your students to submit the questionnaire** - after all, it is their local area data they will want to see.
- 3. Encourage other local schools to also complete questionnaires**

Since the project's launch in October last year, over **410 new** schools have registered to participate in the 2008 questionnaire, bringing the total number of registered schools so far to 3,066. This is the last chance for schools to be part of the 2008 database, and students will be more keen on immersing themselves in data if they feel they have taken ownership of it. Feedback from the 2006 project has shown that students enjoy providing data about themselves, and are engaged by investigating topics about themselves and their peers. See the Community pages of the website for some examples of students work, and assignment sheets

Registered Schools

as at 23 May 2008

ACT	59
NSW	889
NT	39
QLD	461
SA	338
TAS	129
VIC	817

prepared by teachers using data collected from the 2006 questionnaire. This is just one of the many updated pages of the website, which has been recently enhanced to increase user-friendliness!

WA	334
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TOTAL 3,066

Teacher Tip: Teachers may also find it useful to browse through Carrying out the Questionnaire prior to completing the survey with students in class.

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Set the questionnaire for homework

If you're having difficulty finding the time to get your students to complete the questionnaire, why not set it for homework? You can distribute the Student Activity Numbers (SANs) for each student to take home and complete in their own time. This avoids having to book a computer lab or re-organising the program to ensure that all students have access to a computer. Several schools did this in 2006 as one way to manage their student's participation, even allowing for their entire school population to get involved. This is also a great way to ensure your students have access to local area data come data usage phase.



Alternatively you could ask students to take their measurements for homework so that they have their answers ready when doing the live questionnaire. This can also save some time, as students will be prepared when entering their data in the "My measurements" portion of the questionnaire. Review a sample version of the questionnaire to learn more about the measurement questions.

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What will the data look like?

The 2008 questionnaire will bring a wide range of investigative opportunities. The addition of internationally comparable questions and the new slider response questions, bring with them new ways of managing and analysing the data. In line with this, the 2008 Random Sampler has been tailored to provide users with the option of choosing which datasets they want to view, and the database from which they want to extract the data (2006 and/or 2008). For longitudinal analysis, teachers can view the comparable questions between the 2006 and 2008 databases (see a step-by-step guide below). The sample will open in an Excel file with two worksheets, one containing 2006 data and one with 2008 data.

The international common questions can also be easily extracted from the Random Sampler by selecting the option "International questions only" from the criteria options. These are directly comparable with other participating countries including United Kingdom, Canada & New Zealand. For more detailed information about conducting comparisons across countries, please see How The International Data Can Be used from the *About CensusAtSchool* web pages.

The slider response questions will be returned in two different formats to allow for both numerical and categorical analysis to



be undertaken. The numerical output (for such questions as Q38 & Q39) will return a value between 1-1000, whilst the categorical format would return responses ranging from 'Not very important' / 'Somewhat important' / 'Important' / 'Very important'. Watch this space for more 2008 data usability information in the August issue of the CensusAtSchool newsletter. Alternatively browse through Using CensusAtSchool Data to find out more about accessing the data.

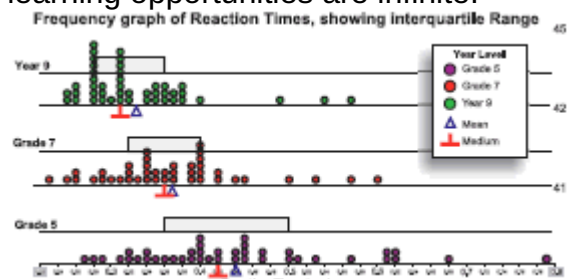


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CensusAtSchool integrating technology in the classroom

CensusAtSchool is a real project for students, that promotes the use of ICT in the classroom. It's not just an internet-based project: it can be incorporated with a wide range of technological tools during the investigative process. Students use Excel to turn data into meaningful information, using a range of simple statistical functions such as mean, median, Countif etc. They can then go one step further and depict the information on a bar graph, a pie chart, a scatter plot and determine which is the best tool for a particular dataset, and why. They can experiment with the scale of the graphs and see how the story changes. This sparks debate about what implications this may have on decision making and how data can be misused in the media for the wrong reasons. The learning opportunities are infinite!

However, the possibilities of ICT applications extend beyond Excel. CensusAtSchool data can be easily loaded into a variety of technologies ranging from GIS and Tinkerplots, to graphic calculators. A Geography class could use GIS to observe spatial representation of a sample using CensusAtSchool data, whilst a Maths class may use Tinkerplots to explore whether girls have faster reaction times than boys?



Data will be easy to use and apply

When teachers and students head to the Random Sampler this year, they will no longer find a CSV file returned to them. The 2008 Random Sampler data ports directly into an Excel file, unlike 2006 data which required conversion from CSV format. This means teachers & students can simply save the Random Sample file in an Excel worksheet and delve into the data instantly.

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What's new in CensusAtSchool

StatSmart Workshop

The ABS office in Victoria recently hosted teachers from Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania for the second workshop of the StatSmart project. StatSmart is a three year study with 45 teachers from these three states to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of CensusAtSchool data in the classroom and assess whether statistical literacy of both teachers and students has improved. The study, partly funded by the Australian Research Council, is undertaken in collaboration with four other external organisations, the University of Tasmania, University of New England, The Noel Baker Centre For School Mathematics and Key Curriculum Press.

CensusAtSchool International Workshop

The second CensusAtSchool International Workshop is now only a month away! Delegates from South Africa, Canada, United Kingdom, France, New Zealand, Australia and the United States will be sharing their experiences about promoting statistical literacy among students, within their respective countries. The workshop is being held at UCLA, Los Angeles on 28-29 July.

Conferences

Education Services has been out and about attending the recent Maths Association of South Australia (MASA) and Maths Association of Tasmania (MAT) conferences. Pat Beeson spoke to the mathematicians at the MASA conference about spatial data and the use of CensusAtSchool data in the classroom. The key message was to encourage teachers to do CensusAtSchool with their students and help build the dataset.

The MAT conference was held at the University of Tasmania in Launceston on the 16-17th May. Mathematics Teacher Consultant, Ian Wong, hosted a workshop about the different applications of CensusAtSchool data in the classroom, and outlined a new activity available from the AAMT website. The resource was created for the National Mathematics Day 2008, observing students' usage of broadband internet over time.

Pat Beeson was also in South Australia recently to attend the Geography Teachers' Association of South Australia conference where she spoke about the range of Education Services resources available to teachers, including CensusAtSchool. While in SA, Pat also conducted 6 teacher workshops on CensusAtSchool. Keep an eye out for future workshops near you!



Japan to join CensusAtSchool participating countries

Delegates from Japan recently visited the Australian Bureau of Statistics to talk about the possibility of Japan's future involvement in CensusAtSchool. An Assistant Professor at Naruto University of Education, Kazuhiro Aoyama says "Japan Statistical Society has strong interest in CensusAtSchool to support students' learning of statistics". A project team has since been formed at the Japan Statistical Society, and further discussions will continue at the CensusAtSchool LA international Conference. This would certainly be an exciting addition to the international CensusAtSchool database!

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CensusAtSchool crosses new technological boundary

The 'Getting Started with CensusAtSchool PD DVD' can now be accessed via YouTube. The tutorials provide a step-by-step guide to using the data in Excel, and offer some ideas about how to apply CensusAtSchool data in YOUR classroom. Chapters range from broad overviews of the project, to the use of specific Excel functions as tools for investigating the data. You can also access these videos via the CensusAtSchool website after 31 May.

Head to YouTube and search 'CensusAtSchool' to get a complete list of tutorials, if you would like to learn more. However if you prefer to own your own copy, the DVDs are still available upon request. To request a DVD to be sent to your school, please contact the

What Teachers are saying about CensusAtSchool in 2008....

"It's been fantastic...We use it as an assessment task in Year 10." - Mary Murdoch from Barrenjoey High School

"I recently found your material... to be absolutely fantastic. My class as well as the other Grade 3/4 classes have used the CensusAtSchool survey as well as the Learning Federation games. I have also passed the information on to the Grade 5/6s." - Karly Chan, Numeracy Coordinator, Torquay Primary School.

"I have found the Census at School data base to be possibly the single most effective resource in teaching Chance and Data." - John Bradbury, Education Officer Numeracy, NT Department of Employment, Education and Training.

"I wish I had access to this data when I was teaching. What a great resource" - Mr Ray Peck, Australian Council for Educational Research.

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If you have any questions or general CensusAtSchool project enquiries, please contact ABS Education Services, CensusAtSchool Team by email censusatschool@abs.gov.au or on free call 1800 623 273 between 9:00am and 5:00pm (AEST) Monday to Friday.

About this Release

The CensusAtSchool newsletter is a service for users of the CensusAtSchool online learning project. It provides useful support information, project updates and community feedback on how the project is being used by teachers and students in schools across Australia. Each issue contains a feature article, a teacher support article and a general interest article, along with project updates, teacher tips and tricks and other related material. For more information on the CensusAtSchool project, visit <https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/cashome.nsf/Home/Home>